C.   AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (Currently Amended) A method for activating a Fibre Channel adapter, said method comprising:

receiving an activation request from a requesting device; ~~and~~

authenticating the requesting device, wherein the authenticating includes receiving an authentication key from an authentication server; and

transitioning the adapter from a quasi-open state to an open state in response to ~~receiving the activation request~~ the requesting device being authenticated.

2.   (Original) The method as described in Claim 1 further comprising:

sending an activated response to the requesting device.

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Currently Amended) The method as described in Claim ~~3~~ 1 wherein the authenticating includes:

receiving a message from the requesting device wherein the message is encrypted using a requesting device private key; and

deciphering the message using a requesting device public key.

6.   (Currently Amended) The method as described in Claim 5 wherein the deciphering includes receiving the requesting device public key from ~~an~~ the authentication server.

7. (Currently Amended) The method as described in Claim ~~3~~ 1 further comprising:

    searching a list of authorized requesting devices;

    wherein the ~~setting~~ transitioning is further in response to the requesting device matching one of the authorized requesting devices.

8. (Currently Amended) An information handling system comprising:

    one or more processors;

    a memory accessible by the processors;

    a nonvolatile storage device accessible by the processors;

    a Fibre Channel adapter operable to connect the information handling system to a Fibre Channel network; and

    a Fibre Channel activation routine, the routine including:

    means for receiving an activation request from a requesting device; ~~and~~

    means for authenticating the requesting device, wherein the means for authenticating includes means for receiving an authentication key from an authentication server; and

    means for transitioning the adapter from a quasi-open state to an open state in response to receiving the ~~activation request~~ requesting device being authenticated.

9. (Original) The information handling system as described in Claim 8 further comprising:

    means for sending an activated response to the requesting device.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) The information handling system as described in Claim ~~10~~ 8 wherein the means for authenticating includes:
means for receiving a message from the requesting device wherein the message is encrypted using a requesting device private key; and
means for deciphering the message using a requesting device public key.

13. (Currently Amended) The information handling system as described in Claim 12 wherein the means for deciphering includes:
means for receiving the requesting device public key from ~~an~~ the authentication server.

14. (Currently Amended) The information handling system as described in Claim ~~10~~ 8 further comprising:
means for searching a list of authorized requesting devices;
wherein the ~~setting~~ transitioning is further in response to the requesting device matching one of the authorized requesting devices.

15. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for activating a Fibre Channel adapter, said computer program product comprising:
means for receiving an activation request from a requesting device; ~~and~~
means for authenticating the requesting device, wherein the means for authenticating includes means for receiving an authentication key from an authentication server;

means for transitioning the adapter from a quasi-open state to an open state in response to ~~receiving the activation request~~ the requesting device being authenticated.

16. (Original) The computer program product as described in Claim 15 further comprising:

    means for sending an activated response to the requesting device.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as described in Claim ~~17~~ 15 wherein the means for authenticating includes:

    means for receiving a message from the requesting device wherein the message is encrypted using a requesting device private key; and

    means for deciphering the message using a requesting device public key.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as described in Claim 19 wherein the deciphering includes receiving the requesting device public key from ~~an~~ the authentication server.